

Riddle of Realms

by Kookiebites13

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Summary: AU. In a world where some are gifted with supernatural powers, China is protected by the zodiac incarnates called Shengxiao Zhanshi. But peace is threatened when the last Dragon incarnate, Oogway, died without appointing his successor, causing panic throughout the whole country. Now Po, Furious Five, and Tai Lung must solve Oogway's riddle of realm and find the Dragon Scroll.

1. Chapter 1

A/N: Hi pandom. I've been wanting to do this AU project for a long time.** Enjoy!**

Disclaimer: I do not own Kung Fu Panda, I'm borrowing the characters and universe for writing practice.

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Riddle of Realms

Chapter 1

"_We began thousands of years ago, you and I, and we begin again today."_

* * *

><p>She heard him coming even all the way from the barracks. His scent was unfamiliar, but he smelled of seasonings, cooking fire, and there was a tinge of aura in him that she recognized from the valley market.<p>

Valley people don't just come up here.

Which was why she was going to see what this guest was up to.

She got up from her bed, changed from her sleeping robe, and then slid her bed aside and opened a secret hatch on the floor she had found the first time she came to the palace. After making sure that her bedroom door was locked, Tigress jumped into the secret hatch.

Under her bedroom was a part of secret tunnels and rooms that goes underground all over the estate. Having traveled almost all the path, she knew the tunnels like the back of her paw and often venture in it for hours during her free time. It became her sanctuary. The best thing was her brother didn't know about it.

From under her bedroom floor, she would walk for about a few meters before the tunnel separated into different paths. The first path on the right will lead to the training grounds. The second to the kitchen area and further into the servant's quarters, the third to the gardens, and the last, the one she took, will take her to the tunnel system under the library, artifact room, and Sacred Hall of Warriors.

The floor and the walls were surprisingly smooth unlike one of a cave. There were a few glowing gems on the walls of the tunnels as sources of light, but she didn't really need them. Her night vision came to aid her better from time to time.

One sharp turn to the left, then another to the right, and a short climb to a cylinder space; she made it into one of the pillars in the Sacred Hall of Warriors. There was a small hole there on the relief plugged with a small wood painted gold. Unplugging it, she saw Zeng coming with Master Shifu and Master Oogway. Her adoptive father and his master greeted the valley goose dressed in red, who in turn, bowed in full respect. But what was he doing here?

Tigress began tuning out her own thoughts, and instead, tuning into the four men's for a quick eavesdrop before they started talking.

Zeng was complaining about being tired. She also heard him thinking about the morning tasks.

Master Shifu only sounded to be slightly irritated, as expected. But from his slightly buzzing mind, which usually means he was tired, Tigress knew he hadn't gone to sleep yet. She didn't find any signs that he was expecting the goose.

Master Oogway's thought didn't provide anything either. Contrary to Master Shifu's though, his mind was collected and calm. She could feel a slight aura of happiness in him, actually. Was this goose an old friend?

When she tuned into the goose's mind, it was chaotic. He was worried, she could tell. He seemed to have brought something round and large covered in black and white fur beside him. Unfortunately she couldn't see clearly what it was, another pillar was blocking her view. She considered moving to another pillar across the room but wouldn't risk missing anything they said.

After further listening, she found out he kept thinking of someone named 'Po' she assumed to be either his brother or his son. So that

must be why he was here.

Civilians only came to the Jade Palace for three reasons. One was educative purposes. Every now and then the school would arrange a little field trip with Oogway to the Sacred Hall of Warriors. She often spied on the tour groups too. The closest thing to school she had was training and study sessions from Soothsayer.

Another was political reasons. Master Shifu was the valley's defender and one of the members in the leader council while Master Oogway was the head of the council itself, for he was the valley's spiritual leader. Since the goose's mind was revolved around a single person, she concluded he was here because of the third reason:

Supernatural.

She switched into their conversation.

"Masters, I apologize for coming at such time without notice."

"There's no need to worry, Mr. Ping," said Master Shifu. "What can we help you with?"

It was then that Tigress saw the black and white object moving. It had shivered, taking the attention of not only her but also the four men.

"Good evening, Po."

"Good evening, Master Oogway."

Mr. Ping had moved back slightly to place a caring wing on the black and white large thing that turned out to be a panda. The sight of him made her gasp. Tigress had never seen a real panda before. All she'd seen were pictures in scrolls. Honestly, she didn't know they still exist.

Plus, if he was there all along, why didn't she hear his mind? He must've thought about something. Judging from his voice, he was still a kid, barely a year or two younger than her.

"My son is in great need of your help." _Oh,_ Tigress thought. "He has been plagued with nightmares and visions."

"Clairvoyance?" Shifu inquired, stepping forward to examine Po. The panda shrunk under his gaze and smiled awkwardly.

"I'm afraid to say," Mr. Ping confessed. "But it might be true."

"What's your evidence?"

Mr. Ping twiddled the edge of his wings, growing unsure. But one look at his son's tired eyes gave him enough power to burst through his doubts. "A few days ago Xiao Po told me not to cross the main bridge. At first, I thought he was being silly. I am a frequent at the spice market across the river, and we were running out of supplies. But Po was insistent, he was so scared." Tigress saw Po look away. "So I

closed the shop for a few days and relaxed until Po will let me. And then yesterdayâ€¦"

"The bridge collapsed," finished the two masters.

Dozens of people were injured. Two people who were passing under the bridge by boat died of drowning after being knocked out by falling heavy debris. The following morning Shifu and Oogway were supposed to go down to the valley and conduct a funeral ceremony. Even Zeng gulped uncomfortably at the horrible memory. He was down at the spice market when the incident happened, and had been the one to alert the Jade Palace masters.

Oogway now moved forward, settling in front of the boy just slightly shorter than him. Mr. Ping slid to the side so his son won't be too crowded, but still close enough if he needed him.

"I'm sorry I only told my dad. I was being selfishâ€¦ and now all those people are hurt because I didn't do anything to stop it," said Po, sniffing.

"What could you have done?" Oogway told him. "Would people have believed you if you had warned them?"

At this, Tigress shook her head firmly. She knew first hand how people sometimes treat the gifted.

But Po wouldn't hear it. "At least I should've tried."

Upon hearing this, Oogway was proud despite not knowing the boy personally. He will never refuse people who needed help, especially those who cared about others. There were always priceless little things in children's mind that never failed to impress him.

"I need to see how strong your power is," Oogway proclaimed softly. Po didn't give a respond until he saw his dad nodding in approval, "Okay."

The answer automatically triggered a procedure. Shifu and Zeng stepped away to give the master some room. Mr. Ping, although a bit reluctant, eventually followed.

The panda soon found himself in a large space alone with Master Oogway, who had his eyes closed in deep concentration. His fingers and palm then started moving slowly in a weird sequence, like how spider's feet move when walking in its web. Imagining it made him sick. Maybe he shouldn't have sneaked a couple of dumplings before coming up here.

Suddenly Master Oogway's fingers stopped all together. Now his arms were stretched forward, like a jiangshi, and began a sequence of movements similar to tai chi. Since Po was naturally curious, he copied the master's movement with his own furry arms.

Shifu raised one interested eyebrow at the sight. Usually when Oogway was reading children's gift strength, they either stood in silence or looked around in confusion. Seeing Po and his master moving together in sync was definitely a first. Moreover, both looked so serene as if they've done this thousands of times before.

It wasn't long until the two were engulfed by golden dusts that moved around them. The number grew larger by each second, until it formed a small tunnel of twisting energy that swiveled upwards and upwards, reaching the ceiling, completely obscuring the other's view of the panda and tortoise trapped inside.

Tigress had only seen this procession once, when she met Oogway for the first time and needed to be tested. But there was nothing for her to do except sit and wait in silence as Master Oogway read her chi.

So when Po suddenly screamed, the shock ricocheted all over the room.

The tunnel of energy exploded and crumbled. It revealed Po and Master Oogway, whose eyes were both glowing light blue, both looked equally horrified. Just after a strong gust of wind slammed the giant twin doors open, blowing away the fallen dusts of energy, their eyes returned to normal and right there in front of their eyes, Po, without any warning, disappeared in a flash along with the remaining glow of Oogway's chi.

Everyone was frozen in place, agape, while Zeng had flinched in surprise with a light shriek.

"Master!" Shifu ran to Oogway's side and helped the fallen master up. The tortoise was gasping for air, seemingly dazed and horrified at the same time. "Master, what did you see?"

"Something extraordinary. The boy—" his fingers pointed to the spot where Po should have been.

"Master?" Shifu asked worriedly.

Oogway shook his head to rid the last of his immense headache and brushed Shifu off. "Why had he disappeared?"

All eyes now turned to Mr. Ping. He came forward with his head slightly down, confessing, "My son can't make himself invisible."

"How interesting," Oogway muttered ambiguously, his smile returning. With a soft grunt, Oogway forced his body to turn the other way and started walking, limping slightly towards the Moon Pool without an explanation against Shifu's immense concern and confusion. He knew that his student would ask all the nonsense questions for him. As he passed by Zeng, he asked the palace servant to prepare a pot of tea for their guests.

"And wake Soothsayer. I need to speak with her."

The urgency in his tone didn't go unnoticed by the goose. "Right away, Master," bowed Zeng before flying to the kitchen.

Shifu was still thoroughly surprised. Not so much because of Po's powers now, but rather where he came from. People from the valley were simple folks and Shifu have never heard of a gifted that came from the Valley of Peace. Although, on second thought, considering Mr. Ping and Po's relationship, he was sure Po came from somewhere far away. "Can he control it?"

"No. He just disappears whenever he's afraid or upset. That's why I need your help, Master Shifu."

Shifu nodded without a doubt. "I'd be honored, Mr. Ping. It is my duty to guide young gifted."

"And I was hoping I could ask one more favor, actually. I heard Lu Zhao had retired. So if you'd let me, I'd like to work here as your chef."

Shifu raised his eyebrows. From his occasional observation to the valley, Mr. Ping was a somewhat a very work-oriented man. Although he used to be alone, he always welcomed customers with open arms as if they were distant relatives visiting. He always tried new things to promote his restaurant, some were even downright a little silly, but if Shifu had to guess, folks loved his quirkiness and his slight temper regarding profits. Even he had heard the story of how Mr. Ping inherited the shop from his father, who had also inherited the shop from his father who won it in a game of mahjong. The noodle shop was the prized treasure of the Ping family. "But what about your shop?"

Mr. Ping's smile was simple when the goose answered, "I wish to stay here as long as Po is under your tuition. He needs me. Please, Shifu, from father to father."

Something in Mr. Ping's voice got to him. For a short moment Shifu saw himself with his son and daughter, and imagined having to part from them. Whether it could be called empathy or not, the important point was that he understood deeply the need to always be close to his children.

"I wouldn't dare separating a son in need from his father."

Mr. Ping expressed his gratitude with his famous energetic flare, overwhelming Shifu a bit, causing a degree of Po's invisible frown was lifted.

Sadly, this part of the conversation was unheard on Tigress' part. She was busy with her own thoughts.

She'd came down to the valley a couple of times, but she never saw a panda walking the streets. This fact intrigued her because she instantly felt sympathy towards him. Sure there was Tai Lung, but she never saw any Bengal tigers around. Sometimes to the point she thought she was the last one alive.

The most intriguing part, however, was the fact that everyone else was somewhat shocked, saying that Po disappeared, while she could clearly see him leaning on the pillar across from her with his knees tucked under his chin. He had jade green eyes, and Tigress regretted the fact that she had to see them for the first time under such distress. She had a feeling they could have been the liveliest eyes ever. Like his father.

"_It'll be okay, Po,"_ she thought as she promised herself that she would greet him before anyone does when morning comes. Secretly she was excited. The only students at the palace were her and her brother, and Tai Lung was ten years older, a gap too big for them to

be playmates. Tai Lung was always busy training, anyway. This time if all goes well, she will have a new friend by breakfast.

She was about to plug back the peeky hole when she heard his terrified voice echoing inside her head, _"Who said that?"_

Po grew wary. It was a girl's voice. His eyes widened and his body froze on the floor at the thought of ghosts. Silently looking around, curling himself into a giant ball, he whispered a couple of "Hello?" and "Who's there?" as he tried to calm his panic breathing. He should be okay, Master Shifu and his dad was just around the corner. A kung fu master and his dad's energy could probably beat up a ghost. Shifu could easily earthbend the ghosts into oblivion and his dad was surprisingly good at knife throwing.

But what if it was an army of ghosts? Oh man, what if the ghosts could see him? He raised his arms in front of him to check whether he'd turned normal, but he still could see the marble floor through them.

And then he heard it again. A young, friendly, curious voice in his head, _"Why would a ghost be afraid of another ghost?"_

It took him a little while to digest the meaning, but his eyes lit up in an instant once he did. Someone else was here. Someone like him!

Now with his fear slowly fading away, Po scanned his surroundings once again. Something, he didn't know what, pulled his attention to the pillar across from him. It looked absolutely identical to the others, yet that something urged him to investigate.

Without getting up, Po shifted closer.

"_Can you hear me?"_ the voice said again, a little louder now. The voice brought his attention to a small spot of amber on the golden relief. It blinked, causing him to give a little yelp, and the voice repeated, _"Can you hear me?"_

He nodded slowly. _"Yeah,"_ he thought. Jade met amber. He didn't know why he was hopeful all of the sudden. _"Can you see me?"_

The amber spot, which he had figured to be an eye, blinked again as she said without the slightest of doubt, an answer nobody else ever gave him, _"Yes."_

* * *

><p>AN: Jiangshi is a hopping ghost from Chinese legend. Or maybe you've seen LoA episode Po Who Cried Ghost (was it? I forgot the title)?**

Thank you so much for reading. RnR?

Up next: You've seen Tigress and Po's powers. What about the other Furious Five?

****A/N:** I apologize in advance for grammatical errors and OOC-ness. But it's an AU, so some characters will be different from their original version.**

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****Hope you enjoy it!****

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Riddle of Realms

Chapter 2

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><p>7 years later**

As Viper slithered on the stairs in Master's Garden, the snow automatically parted to let her through. Next to her, Tigress was keeping an eye for the slightest movements, using the silence to tune in to the boys' thoughts as a mean of detecting them.

"There's no use in hiding, guys, Tigress and I will get you eventually!" Viper shouted, half giggling. "I'm talking to you too, Po!"

"How is this fair again? One is a waterbender and the other can read minds!" Tigress smirked at Mantis' pathetic complaint. "Crane, can't you ask the ghosts around to spook them or something?"

From behind Master Flying Rhino's statue, Crane warned, "They're currently giving you death glares now, Mantis."

"Who? The ghosts or the girls?"

The answer came in a form of a lightning fast snowball smacking him in the face, knocking him off the stone he was perched on.

But, if Mantis really wanted to know, Crane thought, "Both."

Somewhere on the line of statues across from them, Monkey cackled, and then far from his prediction a snowball managed to land rather harshly on him. The sound of impact mixed with his tiny yelp set the two girls bursting with laughter while Po and Crane was still wondering where Monkey was from their respective hiding place. As far as they knew, Viper didn't hit anything but snow.

"Wha-how did you find me?"

"You're the only pile of snow that I couldn't move with my mind."

"Oh," came Monkey's dumbfounded reply as a dim light engulfed him and turned him back to his original form. "I'll keep that in mind next time."

"Now where are our two clairvoyants?" Viper taunted. Her tail twirled around a couple of snowballs each the perfect size to strike down Po and Crane.

"Hey I'm still figuring out my future career, Vi," _Po thought.
"Still choosing between cleaner, comedian, dancer, doctorâ€¦ hm, what else?"

"Emperor?"_

"Oh right emperor! Wait a secâ€¦!" _He turned around to see Tigress grinning dangerously, one hand behind her back and the other bouncing a little snowball.

"Boo."

"Gah!" The sound of snow hitting fur was heard, and quicker than falling dominoes, the game took a surprise turn as Monkey rose from the snowy grounds and onto Master Rhino's axe, shouting, "Brothers, attack!" Smiling, Crane stroke a jab at Tigress' stomach, and quickly teamed up with Po.

"You asked for it. Ha!" Viper challenged back. In a whipping move, she sent dozens of snowballs hurtling towards Monkey. He somersaulted into the air, plucked a few of his hair, and threw them back at the waterbender. Those hairs turned into giant snowballs midflight, but Viper easily lifted a wall of ice to block them. Once they hit her wall of protection, they turned back into golden hairs and fell harmlessly to the ground.

"Monkey, it's disgusting!"

"Admit it, you are no match for my seventy two transformations!" He screeched in victory, and then changed himself into a swallow. Viper resumed her attack. Rocketing snowballs chased after him like bullets and in his state Monkey assumed defense, flying around dodging every single one of them. But his reflex was slowly deteriorating as she continued to tire him out. Monkey now had to deal with bigger snowballs and ranges of water strikes as her attacks picked up more speed.

Speaking of speed, Mantis stood watch from on top Master Chicken's statue as everything unfolded almost as quickly as lightning flashes. Summoning his inner energy, Mantis closed his eyes, and when he opened them again, the world was moving at snail's pace. He could easily walk about thirty steps before one of Viper's snowballs could launch into the air.

"Showtime," he grinned to himself.

Monkey was already on the verge of losing his balance. Flying with wings totally weren't as easy as Crane made it out to be. And just when he managed to force himself to dodge another snowball, Viper caught him off guard and proceeded to trap him inside a bubble of water, drenching his wings.

"Feeling cold, brother?"

"I could say the same thing about you!" Mantis chimed in. Before

Viper could process his sentence, she was being attacked by sharp, tiny snowballs at high speed, blinding her sight and eventually shattering her focus on the bubble of water trapping Monkey. He fell ungraciously on his butt, immediately shaking off the water off his feathers before reverting to his simian form, and extended his leg for a flying kick at the distracted Viper.

Meanwhile on the other side of the newly formed sparring field, Tigress was throwing punches left and right at Po and Crane. She blocked Po's side kick, tripping his other feet. When she turned she barely managed to block Crane's claws. The attacks continued rapidly and Tigress struggled between handling Po's weight and Crane's agility. But as their senior in kung fu she smiled proudly at their progress. Even if their powers couldn't lend much hand during fights, at least they could protect themselves.

"Watch your stance, Po," she said between her breaths. Compared to Crane, who had his mind set on the game, Po was more interested in learning as much as possible. When he saw Tigress landing a fierce kick on Crane, sending the avian to the ground, he copied it. When Crane used his wings to distract the tiger, Po assimilated it with his own moves. The panda wasn't even aware that his harmless intention and Crane's determination to win managed to disorient her by forcing her to juggle between being a teacher and a formidable opponent at the same time.

Crane realized he wasn't going to win this with brutal force. Moreover she could predict his next moves effortlessly with her power. So when Tigress turned her back to him to face Po's series of punches ("Fists of Fury!") Crane, without much thinking, imagined a horrifying face of Nian monster baring its fangs, staring with its piercing eyes. Once Tigress turned back to him, still in battle mode, she automatically read his mind.

What came next was snowball effect, literally!

She screamed in surprise, jumping backwards and crashing into Po, passing on the surprise to him as he slipped on ice and grabbed her arm for balance. But Tigress didn't expect the sudden weight so she too grabbed Crane's leg for support and the three tumbled down the stairs into one giant screaming snowball, taking Mantis, Monkey, and Viper along with them as they continued rolling down the hills in one huddled giant snowy mess.

"Mantis, Viper, do something!" Tigress commanded, her voice trembling. Mantis had his head stuck in snow and unfortunately no one could see him with dizziness clouding their heads. Worse, Crane threatened to throw up and Po's ceaseless screaming only added to their panic.

"Viper, anytime now!"

"Hang on!" Viper grunted, struggling to seize control. It wasn't until Po fearfully began to gather everyone into a hug that Viper unexpectedly acquired a surge of energy and managed to avert them from another mad roll.

The sudden halt brought first silence, and then a collective sigh of relief.

"That," Po panted, "was awesome!"

"Okay Viper, get us out of here. I think Crane can't hold it any longer," Monkey pointed at the avian who looked very green in the face and was nodding frantically.

"With pleasure."

She blasted the snow off them. But as it turned out, they had stopped midair and before anyone could realize so, gravity pulled them down and the six of them plunged into the freezing cold lake together with one last synchronous shriek.

Morning chaos routine? Done.

* * *

><p>Mr. Ping paced around handing tea he just made. Most of the kids were already dry and fine, aside from their developing cold. He considered flying down to the market to get cough syrups against Shifu's judgment that they were young warriors and should only need rest. Mr. Ping didn't worry about their clashing opinions though; most of the time when it comes to the children Shifu only needed a little coaxing to let Mr. Ping do whatever he deemed fit. Even Tai Lung had to suffer Mr. Ping's lengthy lectures whenever he did something dangerous in training. "I told you kids to play inside."<p>

"Dadâ€¦"

"And why is Viper the only one wearing her coat?"

Soothsayer chuckled silently; sending Zeng off to hang the children's wet clothes.

"How did you even end up in the lake?"

"It wasn't my fault," Po scrunched up his face and sneezed. Mr. Ping swatted his arm away before Po could use it to wipe his runny nose, and instead gave him a handkerchief. "Tigress surprised me and I slipped," he sniffed.

Tigress, now in another one of her maroon dresses, tightened her sash. "Well I wouldn't have if it weren't for Crane," she countered.

"Hey don't blame me. I was just getting into the New Year spirit."

Tigress stared at him, unamused. "By imagining a terrifying Nian to surprise me?"

"I thought you don't get surprised easily." She growled at Po. "Oh really? How scary can it-Ah! Stop, stop, you're gonna give me nightmares!"

"Oh yeah, I forgot they have telepathy connection," Mantis said quietly to Viper as she helped Monkey get water out of his ear.

"Why do you think Po and Tigress often laugh out of nowhere?" Monkey

replied.

"I don't knowâ€¦ maybe they remembered something funny?"

Viper piped up, "At the same time? What are the chances?"

Their conversation drew Shifu to listen in. He recalled the day Tigress told him that she could speak to Po with their minds. If he wasn't mistaken, Mr. Ping had fainted, shocked that his son turned out to have more power when he wasn't yet able to control the other two proper. But Shifu wasn't the least bit surprised. Gifted with multiple powers were not rare. On every instance the gifted has barely lethal powers, so Shifu rather thought Mr. Ping had nothing to worry about Po. And Tigress' power was bound to develop further as she ages.

When he reported to Master Oogway, his sage master didn't react immediately. He only looked up from the scroll spread across his lap and asked, "Can she telepathize with anyone else?"

The answer haunted Shifu to this very day.

"Ah, I was wondering where all of you have disappeared to," Oogway announced on his arrival to the tea house.

_"Speak of the devil," _Shifu thought.

To the children's amusement, Oogway wore a pink knit hat and many layers of shawl on top of his jade grandmaster robe, practically a bundle of fabric. More unusual, the grandmaster was wearing leather sandals.

The kids, albeit one or two did in secret, burst into laughter.

Mr. Ping stood up for the master, placing both wings on his hip, "Eh, what are you kids laughing about? You ought to follow Master Oogway. He wouldn't catch a cold this way."

When they only laughed harder, Shifu resolutely cleared his throat, effectively silencing them. "Greet your master, children."

They all jumped to their feet and bowed, "Good morning, Master." Seeing them obedient under his command, Shifu sent a winning glance to Mr. Ping, who scowled challengingly.

"At ease, children. I brought Winter Festival presents," Oogway revealed from behind him Zeng and Tai Lung carrying seven packages. The children practically lit up as they rejoiced, apart from Po, who squealed loudest and started jumping in place. Tai Lung resisted the urge to dribble the panda as he made his way in and disposed the stack of boxes by the round table where Soothsayer sat, his younger brothers and sisters in arms following him like baby geese following their mother. Just not in the same orderly fashion.

"Master, can we pick?" Monkey asked hopefully, already aiming for the biggest package.

"That one is for Tai Lung, Monkey." Hearing this, the simian pouted and blew raspberries at the yellow spotted snow leopard before grabbing the second biggest and shaking it to guess its

content.

"There are our names on it," Tigress noticed as she picked up the package addressed to her.

Monkey turned the package in his hands around until he saw Po's name on it, then with a short, "Heads up, Po!" threw it to him.

"Thank you, Master," they and Tai Lung chorused, gathering around Oogway. He simply nodded humbly at their thanks. Taking off his hat, he knelt in front of them with a small tired grunt. "Unfortunately I will have to leave for a few weeks after the Winter Feast tomorrow," to this, the children groaned sadly, "But remember to help clean up the palace and wash up. Then, help Zeng hand out fu labels to the villagers. I'll be back before New Year's Eve and if you want, we can go down to the village together. How's that?"

"It'll be an honor, Master," Tigress answered for everyone.

"Good. Now run along to your room so you may open your presents and prepare for your performance tomorrow." Oogway hadn't even finished when they bowed again hurriedly and made a run to the student barracks, save for one. "May I have a word with you, Monkey?"

Tigress, though she never admitted it, was a leader figure to the others. Tai Lung would have been, but he was mostly on his own during training and only spent time with them to play. Besides, she doubted her brother would be honored to lead a bunch of twelve year olds. So she began to nurture her leader instinct. That was why she waited for Monkey to come out of the tea house. The others, especially Mantis, were probably already in the dorm gushing over their presents. She was also waiting for Po who had lost his will to run after only ten meters.

So when she saw Master Oogway taking Monkey for a walk around the lake, she tuned in to his thought, and heard something utterly astonishing.

"Where are we going?" Po asked when she grabbed his hand and took him for a detour.

"We can't waste our time. Quick, make us invisible." Po did as told. He was still learning how to make others invisible, but so far he could only do so as long as he was in contact with the object or person, so he let her guide him to where Oogway and Monkey were standing under a peach tree.

"What are they thinking?" Po asked her in his mind.

"I'm not sure. Something about destiny."

"Doesn't Oogway always think about destiny?"

She did not reply, but a wide smile bloomed on her face in lieu of Po's expectation for her to laugh. What he said was true, after all. It's just that lately she'd been sensing Oogway in constant worry over something and Monkey was more reluctant to use his power outside of training or one of their sparring games.

"Are you ready, old friend?" Oogway prompted.

Tigress saw an image of another simian in Monkey's head, with a single coin in his palm which he tossed into the air. "Monk Tai Sui told me only the Monkey incarnates can have the power of 72 transformations."

Tigress and Po looked at each other, aghast.

"A heavy responsibility indeed."

Monkey looked away for a moment, contemplating his fate. He thought he'd accepted it long ago. But now, facing the destined day, he was scared again. "What if I fail the world, Master?"

Oogway smiled wisely. "During the Chaoziran War, the Shengxiao spirits did not deem four chosen mortals worthy because they never fail. It is their failures _and_ their will to fight for justice that made them great. On New Year's Eve, you and hopefully your fellow incarnates will be introduced to the village. Stay loyal to them and the world. Only by doing the opposite will you truly fail." Oogway's trembling finger pointed at him, "Not only the world, but also yourself."

"Which Shengxiao spirits have descended, Master?"

"I will go consult the Shengxiao Council after the Feast tomorrow on the matter, as per tradition. And remember not to use your powers in front of the masters tomorrow."

"Yes, Master. And what about the next Dragon? Does that mean youâ€¦|," Oogway raised his hand to stop Monkey from finishing his sentence, but nodded to confirm it, though not in regret; with the acceptance Monkey craved for all his life.

"My time is not long. I've found Dragon. The Impossible Task awaits you and your fellow incarnates, my friend. It is time for the new Shengxiao Zhanshi to rise."

* * *

><p>AN: So there ya go! Mantis is some sort of Quicksilver hahaha. Which superpower is your favorite?*

**Nian is a beast from Chinese myth said to wander around New Year's Eve/spring attacking people, but prefers children.**

Thanks for reading!

End
file.